GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:435
ANSWERED ON:22.08.2001
LEPROSY VACCINE
DALPAT SINGH PARASTE

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indigenous leprosy vaccines developed by the National Institute of Immunology are being used by Voluntary agencies while the Union Government are importing such vaccines;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard; and

(c) the steps taken/being taken to make leprosy vaccine cheaper, easily available to the common people?

Answer

MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR)

(a) to (c): A statement is laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 435 FOR 22.8.2001

There is no information with Government that some NGOs are using the leprosy vaccine developed by National Institute of Immunology.

The leprosy vaccine developed by National Institute of Immunology is not a prophylactic vaccine but is an immunotherapeutic adjunct to chemotherapy with Multi-Drug Therapy. Moreover, it requires repeated injections of the vaccine at 3 monthly intervals. The efficacy, operational feasibility and safety of the vaccine has to be kept in mind before deciding its mass use in the programme. MDT is by itself a robust treatment. Single dose of MDT is found to kill 99.9% leprosy bacilli in laboratory condition. 98 countries have achieved elimination of leprosy with use of drugs without vaccine. The vaccine has not yet been recommended by ICMR or WHO for use under National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP). No leprosy vaccine is being imported for use under NLEP at present.